



HONORARY CHAIR
Columba Bush
First Lady of Florida

HONORARY VICE CHAIR
The Most Reverend
John H. Ricard, S.S.J.
Bishop of the Diocese of
Pensacola-Tallahassee

SECRETARY OF STATE
Glenda E. Hood

February 15, 2005

Mr. Alan Rosenzweig, Director
Management and Budget
Leon County
Leon County Courthouse
301 S. Monroe Street
Tallahassee FL 32301

MISSION SAN LUIS

2021 West Mission Road
Tallahassee, FL 32304
850-487-1870

Dear Mr. Rosenzweig:

It is with pleasure that I provide the following information on the \$1,000,000 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) Challenge Grant recently awarded to Mission San Luis. Designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960, Mission San Luis is one of America's cultural treasures. It was one of only six projects in the nation, and the only one in Florida, to win a grant under the NEH's *We the People* initiative. The Challenge Grant and matching funds will be used to create a \$4,000,000 endowment to secure the future of research and educational programming at Mission San Luis, thereby enhancing the quality of life in Tallahassee and beyond. In order to meet our first deadline of certifying \$500,000 by March 31, 2005, we are requesting a \$150,000 pledge from Leon County, payable in full by March 31, 2008.

As the only reconstructed mission in the Southeast, and the premier source of education on the Florida missions for our state's schools, residents and visitors, the endowment will enable Mission San Luis to expand its reach and become one of America's top tourist destinations; attracting tens of thousands of visitors annually (Mission San Juan Capistrano attracts 600,000 people per year!). Numbers of visitors translate directly into dollars spent in the community, employment, as well as tax revenue for state and local governments. Each visitor brought to our community by Mission San Luis will produce rich rewards for a wide array of local businesses ranging from hotels and retail establishments to gas stations and restaurants.

To leverage the \$1,000,000 NEH challenge grant, Mission San Luis must raise an additional \$3,000,000 within four years based on the following conditions established by the NEH:



LEON COUNTY LEGACY
A CAMPAIGN TO ENDOW MISSION SAN LUIS

1) The first \$500,000 of this offer is available beginning October 1, 2004 until March 31, 2005. The next \$250,000 of the offer will be available after April 1, 2005 until March 31, 2006. The final \$250,000 of the offer will be available after April 1, 2006 until March 31, 2007. All offers are conditional upon availability of sufficient funds allocated for matching purposes in the Challenge Grants Program.

2) To receive the full challenge grant award, we must raise at least \$3,000,000 in new nonfederal contributions. The first year's allocation will be released as matched one-to-one. Allocations for the second and third years will be released as matched one-to-one but only after the remaining prior-year's match is completed. A final year is allowed to complete the matching requirement for funds already released in the third year.

3) To receive the respective offers, we must certify receipt of \$500,000 in gifts by March 31, 2005, receipt of an additional \$1,250,000 by March 31, 2006, and receipt of an additional \$750,000 by March 31, 2007. By March 31, 2008, we must certify an additional \$500,000 to bring the total of certified contributions to three times the total federal offer.

The following chart summarizes the contributions we must certify to receive all annual offers in full and on schedule:

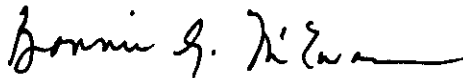
(All figures in thousands)

Fund-raising Periods	Start to 3/31/2005 Year #1	4/1/2005 to 3/31/2006 Year #2	4/1/2006 to 3/31/2007 Year #3	4/1/2007 to 3/31/2008 Year #4	TOTALS
Remaining match of prior year's offer	N/A	\$1,000	\$500	\$500	\$2,000
Match to release current year's offer	\$500	\$250	\$250	N/A	\$1,000
TOTAL TO BE RAISED	\$500	\$1,250	\$750	\$500	\$3,000

Florida's First Lady, Columba Bush, serves as Honorary Chair of the Mission San Luis Endowment Campaign, which to date has raised nearly \$250,000 toward this year's goal of \$500,000. We have a 100% contribution rate among The Friends of Mission San Luis, Inc. Board of Directors, as well as our staff! Additionally, the campaign has received enthusiastic community support which includes a \$125,000 leadership gift from the Archibald Foundation, as well as donations from Capital City Bank, Wachovia Bank, and Rambana and Ricci, P.A.

This Challenge Grant is a once in a lifetime opportunity from the National Endowment for the Humanities, and gives the site and our community the ability to leverage federal dollars to enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors alike. Mission San Luis would be proud to partner with Leon County in this important endeavor to build a stronger and more economically dynamic community for our citizens. Thank you for your consideration of our request. Should you need additional information, please feel free to contact me or Ms. Diane Y. Jefferson, Development Director, at 487-1970.

Sincerely,



Bonnie G. McEwan, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Friends of Mission San Luis, Inc.
2021 Mission Road
Tallahassee, FL 32304
850.487.1791
bmcewan@dos.state.fl.us

BGM/dj

Enclosures



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20306

THE CHAIRMAN

September 24, 2004

Dr. Bonnie McEwan
Mission San Luis
2021 Mission Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32304-1645

Dear Dr. McEwan:

On behalf of the National Endowment for the Humanities, I would like to congratulate you and your colleagues on your NEH *We the People* Challenge Grant. The Endowment is very pleased to join with you in strengthening humanities activities at Mission San Luis. This is a high honor: yours is one of only six institutions to receive such an award.

As you know, NEH challenge grants are awarded only after a demanding peer review process. Your proposal was reviewed by scholars in American history and administrators with expertise in long-term planning for the humanities. These evaluators were especially impressed with the role of Mission San Luis in addressing the significant but seldom told story of Spanish influence on the East Coast. Readers noted your application's persuasive and eloquent description of the importance of the interactions between the Hispanic settlers and Native Americans, relationships that preview continuing questions about legal inclusion, multiple belief systems, and ethnic diversity that are at the center of debate and discussion today.

Again, congratulations on your *We the People* Challenge Grant. We are delighted to be a funding partner for this exciting endeavor, and I hope others will join with us in supporting the enrichment of the humanities in America.

Sincerely,

Bruce Cole

cc: Ms. JuDee L. Pettijohn



Florida Department of State
Glenda E. Hood
Secretary of State

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
October 8, 2004

Contact: Bonnie McEwan, Ph.D.
850.487.1791
bmcewan@dos.state.fl.us

National Endowment for the Humanities Awards \$1,000,000 Challenge Grant to Mission San Luis

Tallahassee, FL -- Secretary of State Glenda E. Hood is pleased to announce that the National Endowment for the Humanities has awarded a \$1,000,000 Challenge Grant to Mission San Luis. The Mission was one of only a few projects in the country to receive a grant under the Endowment's *We the People* initiative, which emphasizes "founding principles in the United States in their full historical and institutional contexts." Florida's First Lady, Columba Bush, is the Honorary Chair of the Mission San Luis Endowment Campaign. "This is excellent news for Mission San Luis," said Mrs. Bush. "The Challenge Grant will enhance Mission San Luis' highly successful research and educational programs. It will help the Mission further explore and communicate the rich cultural heritage to visitors of all ages and from all walks of life."

Located in Tallahassee, Mission San Luis was the 17th century capital of Spanish Florida. The site has been managed by the Florida's Department of State's Division of Historical Resources since 1983. "Thanks in part to generous support from the National Endowment for the Humanities, over the past 20 years Mission San Luis has become a model program for investigating Hispanic-American cultural development in our country. It is also the premier source of education on the Florida missions for our state's schools, residents, and visitors," said Secretary Hood.

The grant represents special recognition for model projects that advance the study, teaching, and understanding of American history and culture, and is the fifth major grant the site has received from the NEH. "Research at Mission San Luis has contributed significantly to an understanding of our country's diverse origins and rich national character," said project director Dr. Bonnie McEwan. "We are delighted that the National Endowment for the Humanities values this archaeological and historical treasure as much as we do." The NEH challenge grant will be used to leverage matching funds and create an endowment for Mission San Luis.

For more information on the endowment campaign, contact the Mission San Luis Office of Development at 850.487.1970.

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TRAVEL

Florida: New day for historic Mission San Luis

Tuesday, January 25, 2005 Posted: 12:02 PM EST (1702 GMT)

TALLAHASSEE, Florida (AP) -- Mission San Luis is thriving again.

Three hundred years ago, the advance of British troops prompted several hundred Spanish and Apalachee Indians living in San Luis to burn their church and homes and flee.

Research and reconstruction at the site began 20 years ago, and Mission San Luis de Apalachee now attracts thousands of visitors each year as the only reconstructed Spanish mission in Florida.

The hilltop site a few miles west of the Florida Capitol includes a reconstruction of the 17th-century church that existed three centuries ago and the nearby Apalachee council house.

Both were impressive -- very impressive -- in their day.

The church was as large as its counterpart in St. Augustine -- and the council house even bigger. Capable of holding more than 2,000 people, the council house was the largest Indian structure historians know of in the southeastern United States.

"There's nothing like it," said Bill Herrle, a longtime business lobbyist who serves as chairman of the Friends of Mission San Luis, a nonprofit support group.

More than 100 Spanish missions stretched across north Florida into the Panhandle in the 17th century. Most were small and consisted primarily of one or two Franciscan friars living in a native village.

But San Luis was unique. It was the Spaniards' western capital and also home to the most powerful Apalachee chief. Some 1,500 Apalachee and Spaniards lived in or around the mission -- with another 6,000 or so Apalachee living in the region.



The present church building located at the Mission San Luis site was built from historical specifications.

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The church and the council house both sit on a large central plaza, a common feature to Apalachee villages and Spanish towns.

"One of the things that's so interesting was the fact that you have very distinct cultures coming together and establishing this town together," said Bonnie McEwan, the archaeologist who is director of the site.

Social organization

The mission was the center of a bustling community for nearly half a century, including a fort as well as the church and council house and other smaller related buildings.

"It was a Spanish pueblo, a town, it was also an Indian village, it was a mission, it was a military fort," McEwan said.

Three centuries later, many of the roots of Florida's traditions can be found at San Luis, ranging from agriculture to overseas trade to Hispanic-American culture.

The Spanish ranches around San Luis raised cattle and grew wheat and citrus. They exported thousands of tons of materials by transporting them down the St. Marks River to the Gulf of Mexico and sailing to Havana, McEwan said. And archaeologists have found porcelain from the other side of the world at the site.

"It really represents the beginning of Florida's international trade and participation in the global economy," McEwan said.

Archaeologists began working at the site a year after the state purchased the land. Although historians knew where the mission site itself was, they didn't know much else.

"Nobody knew about these enormous buildings at the plaza area," McEwan said.

She believes the buildings reflect the mutual respect between the Apalachee and the Spanish.

"These buildings, to my mind, were a metaphor for what was going on here in terms of social organization -- and speak to a level of accommodation that was unprecedented at other Spanish missions," McEwan said.

But it came to an abrupt and violent end.

In the early 18th century, the British raided the Spanish missions in Florida. With the troops just a couple of days away, the Spanish and Apalachee burned Mission San Luis on July 31, 1704, and fled.

Most of the Spanish returned to St. Augustine and later to Havana. But the Apalachee went in all directions. Some were killed, some went west and most went north, many as slaves.

Rebuilding projects

Last year marked a "300th commemoration of the Spanish missions," McEwan said. "It's really a somber observance but an important one in our state's history."

Historian Michael Gannon, a professor emeritus at the University of Florida, called the British attacks on the Spanish missions and the tribes in the region "one of the great tragedies in the stories of the South."

"It's almost never mentioned but more and more details are being discovered," he said.

After the British attacks, the missions lay fallow for a long time. It would be more than a century before U.S. surveyors even considered the area for Florida's territorial capital.

Attachment # 1
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Historians long believed that no descendants of the Apalachee survived, but in 1996 a group of people in Louisiana identified themselves as Apalachee. The tribe, now including 200 to 300 people, is seeking federal recognition based on parish baptismal records, McEwan said.

One of these descendants, Chief Gilmer Bennett, has visited the mission site several times, most recently in July during a ceremony marking the anniversary of the destruction of the mission.

"I think it's going to be something good for Florida and something good for us," Bennett, 72, said from his home in Libuse, Louisiana.

Mission San Luis, which attracted 12,000 visitors this year, has ongoing archaeology -- but also costumed interpreters to bring to life the history. Many of the visitors are students -- and that's important to McEwan, who said the only thing she remembers about the entire fourth-grade is visiting a California mission.

She thinks Mission San Luis will have a similar impact -- on adults as well as children.

"It really changes your whole perception of Florida missions to visit this site."

Herrle remembers what the site used to be like in its early years.

"You didn't see much," he said. "Some fields and some trees and some archaeological markings and some digging going on."

Rebuilding began in earnest in 1997. The reconstructed church was built in 2000. The council house is nearing completion and is expected to open early this year.

"We're ready to become something to be compared to St. Augustine, to Jamestown, to Williamsburg," Herrle said.

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Some Important Distinctions

Mission San Luis is the largest and most important of the Florida missions.

Mission San Luis was the western capital of more than 100 missions that dotted the Florida landscape.

San Luis is the only 17th-century Spanish mission that has been recreated and is open to the public.

It is the only Florida mission with living descendants--the Apalachees.

The early blending of Hispanic and Indian cultures and Mission San Luis represents the roots of our diverse state and national character.

The entire site was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960.

The Apalachee council house at San Luis is the largest known historic period Indian building in the Southeast.

After more than two decades of research, San Luis is the most thoroughly investigated mission in the Southeast and a model program for exploring Hispanic-American cultural development.

The site boasts one of the most impressive collections of Spanish colonial and Apalachee Indian artifacts anywhere, and many of them are on display for public viewing.

Mission San Luis is the premier source of education on the Florida missions for our state's schools, residents, and visitors.

Mission San Luis is utterly unique in its ability to communicate its message of ethnic, religious, and legal diversity in the origins and early institutions of our country.

Mission San Luis, 2020 Mission Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32304
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